

**Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Minutes – Special Mental Health Advisory Committee  
4:00 – 5:00 PM**

**Date:** Friday, March 30, 2007

**Location:** Lied Learning and Technology Center, Omaha, NE

**Interpreter:** Dave Borgaila

**Members Present**

Vickie Frizzell Pratt  
Melinda Brown  
Richard McCowin  
Jackie Prater

**Technical Advisors Present**

Mandy Leamon  
Diane Meyer

**NCDHH Staff Present**

Peggy Williams

**NCDHH Board Present:** Daniel Darnall and Mary Ann Burke

**Special Guest:** Steve Spelic, Operations Director, Emergency Access and Outreach Behavioral Services for Alegen Health

**Gather, Welcome and Introductions**

Ms. Pratt called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM and introductions were made.

**The Lasting Hope Recovery Center Overview – Steve Spelic**

Mr. Spelic gave an overview of The Lasting Hope Recovery Center which will open in Omaha mid December, 2007 and is licensed under Alegen Bergan Mercy. Most of the employees will be Alegen employees, however, some will be contracted by Horizon. The Center will be located in the old Richard Young Hospital facility which is being remodeled at this time. The Center will serve adults 19+ and serve Region 6 individuals only. A group of philanthropist in Omaha recognized a need for mental health services and formed the foundation for the Center. The goal for this Center is to be total seclusion and restraint free.

The Center will be a 64 bed licensed facility and have several components. The Assessment Center will offer services for both involuntary and voluntary patients and include a psychiatric program, full lab, and full pharmacy. Involuntary patients will have a private entrance into the facility. A licensed psychiatric nurse will be on site for triage. The Center will not serve as an ER. Each patient will be in a private room with large windows and the Center will include 7 gardens, each will have a different theme. Mr. Spelic stated that in the future kid's beds might be added. Mr. Spelic discussed in great length the therapeutic model that will be used. This will be discussed further at the next MHAC meeting.

### **Discussion on Forming a Partnership**

Mr. Spelic was very positive about making this Center accessible for deaf and hard of hearing people. He asked questions about alert lighting systems and VRS. He indicated he would be setting up a meeting with Julie Cassel, Architect for the Center and would let Peggy Williams know so she could attend the next meeting and provide the team and Ms. Cassel with information on technology.

### **Present Design to the Partnership**

Discussion was held regarding services for deaf and hard of hearing people. It was decided that a sub-committee would be set up to outline/recommendations on the needs for the deaf and hard of hearing and submit them to Mr. Spelic as soon as possible. The sub-committee consists of Vickie Frizzell Pratt, Jackie Prater, Mandy Leamon and Peggy Williams. The first meeting will be held on April 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 PM at Vickie Frizzell Pratt's office.

### **Next Meeting**

The next MHAC meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup> at 4600 Valley Road, 4<sup>th</sup> floor in classroom 4-B.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.